1:Opler E-5 (1931-1937)1941
(ca. 1870) NT8 Eastern Apache NT8
Chiricahua

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AN APACHE LIFE-WAY

A practical purpose is credited to another activity:

We used to chase birds and butterflies. We would let the butterflies go after catching them. Both boys and girls did it. The old people said it would make us fast runners. In wet weather we could catch big birds. Their wings get wet in the rain and they can't go fast.

An unusual type of recreation involves the bat:

The boys used to build a fire at night. When the bats came by, they would throw their moccasins at them. They would get them in the moccasins and kill them. That's how the Indian boys used to play at night.

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The children imitate many of the social and ceremonial practices of their elders:

During this time Old Man J., a lively old man, used to come out and sing for us while we danced the masked-dancer dance in the evening. The old people would be there and watch. We didn't dress up. The old people didn't allow us to dress up, for it was said to bring evil influence. The songs which were sung were N.'s songs. J. would ask him if it would be all right to sing these songs, and N. would tell him to go ahead.

Actually the boys learn much more than the steps and songs of the masked dancers on these occasions. For instance, the exchange between the two old men must have impressed upon them that ceremonial songs are personally owned and that permission must be obtained from the owner before using them. When the children are playing masked dancer away from the camps, they sometimes violate the rule about wearing costumes and make headdresses to wear and wands to carry.

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Social dances are of increasing interest to the children as they grow older. "We used to dance the circle dance too, just the boys. Sometimes the old men would join in and sing for us. They certainly had a good time watching us."

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The children organize elaborate and dramatic imitations of adult occupations. They hunt, with tall grass as the woods and playmates for the game animals. They go scouting and defend themselves against enemy attacks, using spears made from sunflower and lupine stalks.

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Boys and girls play house in a realistic manner. They build small homes modeled after the regular residences (often making them large enough to enter), play man and wife, entertain visitors to whom they extend the amenities, and arrange feasts with provisions concocted from sticks and mud: